



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**For More Information Contact:** Lt. Chris O'Neil, (314) 539-3091 ext. 3217

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## **Coast Guard Opens Upper Mississippi River, Advisories Continue**

ST. LOUIS – The Coast Guard Captain of the Port (COTP), St. Louis, has today opened two sections of the Upper Mississippi River that were closed to vessel traffic, due to multiple groundings of tows on Wednesday. A slight rise of the river, an U.S. Army Corps of Engineers forecast of a one-foot rise at the St. Louis gauge, and the results of surveys conducted at mile markers 168 and 126, indicate that it is safe for barge traffic to resume, with some conditions. Those conditions are that only those barges drafting nine feet or less may proceed through the river at mile markers 167 to 169, near the Jefferson Barracks Bridge at St. Louis, and mile markers 124 to 126 near Ste. Genevieve, Mo. Tows with barges drafting more than nine feet will have to wait until at least Friday when the COTP will re-evaluate river conditions. The safety advisory for the Upper Mississippi River issued Tuesday evening remains in effect. That advisory requests that the drafts of barges in tows be limited to no more than eight feet, six inches, that southbound tows have no more than 20 barges, and that northbound tows have no more than 24 barges. Only those barges that were already being towed on the river at the time of Tuesday's advisory may exceed the eight foot, six inch draft. Any barges currently being loaded or added to tows must draft no more than eight foot, six inches.

The river stage as read on the St. Louis gauge at 10:00 a.m. today was -4.2.

All but two barges of the 20-barge tow of the HARRIET ANN have been re-floated. The tow of the HARRIET ANN ran aground at mile marker 126 Wednesday morning causing an eight-barge breakaway and the blockage of the navigable channel for most of the day. The two remaining barges are being lightered in an effort to re-float them. The two, grounded barges are not blocking the channel and should not impede vessel traffic.

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